Chicago Tribune

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Cop's fatal shooting of 2 ruled unjustified

COPA casts doubt on officer's account, reasons for firing on teen, bystander on West Side

LeGrier

Jones

Rialmo

By Dan Hinkel | Chicago Tribune

Chicago police disciplinary officials have ruled that an officer was unjustified in the fatal 2015 shooting of a baseball-bat clutching 19-year-old and an innocent bystander.

The Civilian Office of Police Accountability determined that Officer Robert Rialmo unjustifiably shot Quintonio LeGrier and 55-year-old Bettie Jones while responding to a domestic disturbance on the West Side on the day after Christmas two years ago, according to documents obtained by the Tribune through an open records request. After LeGrier approached officers with an aluminum baseball bat, Rialmo shot the teen and accidentally hit Jones, a neighbor standing nearby.

The ruling, dated Dec. 22, casts doubt on Rialmo's account of events and turns in part on investigators' determination that the evidence indicated that LeGrier did not swing the bat at Rialmo, as the officer has said. Investigators also found that the evidence — including shell casings, witness statements and forensic analysis — also suggested Rialmo was farther away from LeGrier when he fired than the officer has said. LeGrier fell in the vestibule of an apartment building, and Rialmo said he opened fire from the building's front porch, but investigators determined it was more likely the officer was between the bottom of the porch and the sidewalk out front.

The agency concluded that a "reasonable officer" would not have believed he was in danger of

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ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Homer Glen retirees Ken and Denise Holub are frustrated over high bills from Illinois American Water, which owns the village water system.

TRIBUNE INVESTIGATION THE WATER DRAIN

A VITAL RESOURCE IN PRIVATE HANDS

Rates, tempers rise as towns contract out water system management

By Ted Gregory, Patrick M. O'Connell and Cecilia Reyes | Chicago Tribune

At every open house that real estate agent Dan Kenney hosts in Homer Glen, he hears the same inquiry from out-of-towners looking to move to the community with strong schools, open spaces, low crime and starry night skies 25 miles southwest of downtown Chicago.

"It's always the first question out of their mouths," Kenney said. "'What's up with the water rates in Homer Glen?'"

Illinois American Water, a privately managed company, owns and operates Homer Glen's system. The arrangement makes Kenney's answer thorny and underscores complications that surface in many towns when a private company runs the water system, an increasingly frequent arrangement across the U.S.

Much of the tension swirls around profit being tied to providing an essential life resource, and the debate over higher rates that private water companies typically charge compared with municipally run systems.

Homer Glen residents pay $85.58 a month per 5,000 gallons, not including sewer charges — a figure higher than all but one of the Chicago area's publicly managed systems that use Lake Michigan water, according to a Chicago Tribune

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Mad dash on property taxes may not pay off

Despite IRS advisory, collar-county offices see long wait times

By Erin Hegarty and Nereida Moreno
Chicago Tribune

Thousands of Chicago-area homeowners hurried Thursday to prepay their property taxes before the federal tax code changes Jan. 1, with Cook County residents confident that the tax deduction strategy will work for them but those in the collar counties somewhat less certain.

The new federal tax law caps the amount of property tax and state and local income tax someone can deduct on their federal income tax return at $10,000. Those who are paying their upcoming property tax bills ahead of time intend to claim the payments as a deduction on their 2017 returns, before the $10,000 cap takes effect for 2018.

The new law also nearly doubles the standard deduction to $12,000 for single filers and $24,000 for people filing jointly with a spouse. Because of the increase, many people who have historically itemized deductions for such things as property taxes or mortgage interest will get more by claiming the standard deduction for 2018. In that case, shifting an itemized deduction from 2018 to 2017 may be advantageous.

Throwing uncertainty into the already confusing process is an IRS statement Wednesday that "a prepayment of anticipated real property taxes that have not been assessed prior to 2018 are not deductible in 2017."

Cook County officials say that because they can provide

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Will #MeToo create workplace change?

2018 could see uptick in harassment reports as more feel empowered

By Samantha Bomkamp
Chicago Tribune

If 2017 was the year of a national reckoning on workplace sexual harassment, 2018 may be when reports from victims in cubicles and corner offices start piling up.

Here's why that's a good thing: Before companies can begin to rid the workplace of inappropriate behavior, observers say, employers need to go beyond handbooks and PowerPoint presentations to create an environment where employees feel safe and supported enough to report it. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission estimates that three-fourths of all workplace harassment goes unreported, so as victims feel empowered, reports of sexual harassment may climb.

In a June 2016 report, more than a year before allegations against Harvey Weinstein were reported, the EEOC suggested managers be praised for an increase in sexual harassment complaints in their departments. Such

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TERRENCE ANTONIO JAMES/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Containing the unstoppable cold

As city officials brace for continued frigid temperatures, some residents, like Cassietta Sago and her kids Zicharee, left, and Kevin, enjoy the snow Thursday in Humboldt Park. **Weather coverage in Chicagoland, Page 4**

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